

thanks to Joyce Savage for the photo

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS FOR RESIDENTS

There's been a lot going on and with the change of management in the BEO we are getting traction and tangible improvement. There is still a long way to go but the articles in this edition summarise some recent successes:

- Excess Service Charges, Financial Redress
- BEO Organisation Implementation of Altair Report

- Residential Reset, City's Relationship with Residents
- Governance Review of Residents' Representation.

On the housekeeping front we have now completed the setting up of a new membership system, have appointed an administrator and are planning improvements to our website and communications generally.

FINANCIAL REDRESS FOR EXCESS SERVICE CHARGES DUE TO CITY NEGLIGENCE

You will have seen Dan Sanders' 'without prejudice' message of 20th September promising to address maintenance and practice failures in the past and evaluate areas for potential rebate.

This welcome review is the culmination of a number of initiatives to get the City to recognise that we have been significantly overcharged for poor or non-existent services and to remedy its neglect of our Estate.

The work that has gone into this is summarised below:

- Pressure from residents' representatives on the Service Charge Working Party resulted in the City agreeing to an independent review of the BEO. This was undertaken by Altair and reports produced in January and May 2023. Altair identified disorganisation, mismanagement and general inefficiency in the BEO resulting in poor service and high service charges to leaseholders.
- In October 2023 Adam Hogg and I wrote to the City's Town Clerk/CEO to put him on notice of the issues of the historical neglect and mismanagement of our Estate and the need for financial redress. We met him in December to discuss the issues.
- The December 2023, Barbican Association Newsletter, article 'Legacy of Neglect of the BRE and Historical

Service Charges' written by me and Adam Hogg alerted residents to the issue and provided an overview of the key areas of concern at the time.

- I convened a small group early this year from houses where the effects of the neglect had already had significant effect. We produced a report which identified scenarios where we considered service charges should not have been paid at all or in part.
- Such scenarios still apply to a lot of current and future charges eg balconies, roofs and windows where past neglect necessitates works being undertaken now and/or being planned.
- Our report was sent to Dan Sanders and a meeting was held with him in April.
- Since April the issue of financial redress/restitution has been raised at every possible opportunity including RCC meetings.
- At a Transformation Board meeting in early September Adam and I took the opportunity to remind members that it was nearly a year since the Town Clerk was put on notice of the issues and we needed resolution. They agreed that it needed to be pursued further and this was also agreed by the City's Barbican Residential Committee that afternoon. The result was Dan's message of 20th September. There remains the challenge of quantification of past overcharging and the appropriate restitution and which current/ future works should not be charged. This exercise will take a further 3-6 months.

Sandra Jenner
Chair Barbican Residents' Consultation Committee

BEO REORGANISATION

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ALTAIR REPORT

The Altair reports, published last year, summarised the findings of the BEO Review and identified problems of mismanagement, general inefficiency and ineffectiveness and high service charges.

Since then the old management have gone and a new team recruited, led by Dan Sanders.

A major recommendation in the review was that the BEO should have a dedicated Repairs service and workforce. Hitherto it had been part of the City's general housing repairs service and the staff were shared.

We fully supported this proposal and argued strongly that

it should be extended to BEO Major Works, which had also been part of the City's general housing service, and we produced a minority recommendation to that effect.

Since the production of the Altair reports we have plugged away at getting both proposals implemented in the short term.

A major win was when Dan arrived in March and immediately accepted the merit of both proposals and implemented them by reorganising the BEO to include all BEO Repairs and Major Works with dedicated BEO staff in the Property Department under the Head of Property.

Any further reorganisation would build upon that fundamental and critical change in structure which has already been implemented.

Adam Hogg

Chair Barbican Association

and

Sandra Jenner

Chair Barbican Residents' Consultation Committee

RESIDENTS' REPRESENTATION

NEED FOR A REVIEW

We welcome the recent message from Dan Sanders' to all Barbican Leaseholders on 18th September which said:

"I have been struck by the confusion as to the roles and responsibilities of the various representative bodies, the Residents Consultative Committee (RCC), the Barbican Association (BA), the Barbican Residential Committee (BRC), and the individual blocks Recognised Tenants' Associations (RTAs).

The current arrangements were put in place in 2003. As the estate ages and the legal landscape in which we operate evolves it is essential to ensure that these groups are operating in a transparent, efficient, and legally compliant manner."

He announced that there would be a review of governance, undertaken by an independent consultant in quarter 2 next year.

BACKGROUND

The confusion over the current situation was recognised in a paper¹ we produced last September, following which a meeting of House Group Chairs agreed that the issue of Residents' Representation should be considered further, and a Working Party was established.

The Working Party decided that the higher priority in the short term was to consider the most effective interface with the 'new' BEO management and structure. They produced a report² recommending the establishment of the new BEO Reporting Committee where Dan Sanders reports on the stewardship of the BEO. Once this Committee is fully up and running it should satisfy the proposal in the Altair report for a single point of contact and accountability to leaseholders.

However, the over-arching issue of governance remains outstanding.

More recently there has been debate at the BA's General Council about the legal status of the Association as a Recognised Tenants' Association (RTA) alongside individual house group RTAs.

Legal advice received from the Federation of Private Residents Associations has confirmed that the current arrangements are proper, but some members are still concerned.

Given the above, we are pleased that Dan considers that a wide-ranging governance review is desirable, that it will be conducted independently and include how the City itself oversees the management of our estate as Landlord and Freeholder.

Adam Hogg

Chair Barbican Association

Sandra Jenner

Chair Barbican Residents' Consultation Committee



1.Future of Residents Representation paper



2.Residents Representation Working Party Report

RESIDENTIAL RESET

GETTING THE CITY TO TAKE MORE NOTICE OF RESIDENTS' VIEWS

It is now more than 2 years since Chris Hayward announced that the City should pay more attention to residents' views and many further statements have been made by the City since. (See summary below) However, there remains no tangible evidence in terms of actions so we decided to ask residents for their views, posing the question:

What actions/policies by the Corporation would give confidence to residents that the initiative was a real reset?" From their responses we have distilled the following actions/policies:

STATEMENT OF POLICY

An unequivocal statement from the Chair of Policy and Resources Committee (P&R) that residents form a necessary and important part of the City and should be treated with the same level of respect as developers, businesses and workers.

RESIDENTIAL ENGAGEMENT

- Reboot Residential Reset by setting up joint officer and resident working party to review and recommend a new approach. Question time is not taken seriously by residents and should be replaced.
- Engage in meaningful early consultation with the appropriate bodies on planning and all matters affecting residents.
- Regular review of this important initiative at P&R with feedback to residents.

POLLUTION AND RESIDENTS HEALTH

- Implementation of plans to reduce traffic noise and pollution around residential areas.
- Prosecution of noisy motor bikes.
- Ban building work within 50 metres of residential areas on Saturdays.
- Target noise from office air conditioning and light pollution near residences at night.

SAFETY

- More overt police/security presence in residential areas.
- Take action to protect pavements and pedestrians from cyclists, e-bikes and e-scooters.
- Enforce traffic rules and 20 mph speed limits.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- A declaration that preserving residential amenity in the City Plan 2040 is not an aspiration but obligatory.

- Meet Landlord and Freeholder's statutory requirements constantly to maintain residential estates rather than allow degeneration requiring major capital projects to rectify. These create great disturbance to residents over long periods.
- Protect residential areas from over development and ever-increasingly higher office buildings. These reduce sun/natural light with homes forever in shade and lacking privacy with office floors in direct line of site into residents' homes.
- Enforce retrofit rather than demolition around residential areas.

SUMMARY OF CITY PRONOUNCEMENTS

At the Barbican Association AGM in 2022 Chris Hayward, in his address, said that the Corporation should pay more attention to residents' views

In February 2023 a 'Residential Reset' was formally approved by the Corporation.

In April 2024 a paper entitled 'Resident Engagement Update' was considered by the City and Common Councillor Jacqui Webster was appointed point person for Resident Engagement.

The Corporate plan 2024-29, published in March 2024 states: *'By improving our public services and cultural offer we want our residents to be able to call the Square Mile the best place to live.'*

There are also commitments to:

- Reset the Corporation's relationship with residents
- Ensure City development minimises carbon, meets the highest standards for sustainability, improves energy efficiency by retrofitting out buildings and using renewable energy.
- Ensure the City is a place where residents want to spend time
- Provide more space for walking and making the City's streets more accessible.
- Ensure the licensing service considers the views of residents.
- Deliver new social rented homes and focus on housing management quality and service standards.
- Improve housing management, communication and engagement across our social housing portfolio and the Barbican Estate.
- Complete a refurbishment programme for the Grade II listed Golden Lane Estate.

Many of these are aspirational rather than specific actions. The Barbican Association had not been asked for its views on these initiatives until the appointment of Jacqui Webster.

Adam Hogg

Chair Barbican Association

Barbican Association Discount Scheme Participants

CLOTHES

Goff Courtney – **NEW**

FOOD AND DRINK

3SP Moorgate
Artillery Arms
Barbican Brasserie
Barbican Grill
Barbican Kitchen
Bengal Tiger
Chiswell Street Dining Rooms
Coq D'Argent
Côte
FARE Restaurant + Bar
Fish Central
Fish Market Restaurant
German Gymnasium
The Jugged Hare
Leydi – **NEW**
Malmaison Bar & Grill
Mayura Barbican
Moshi Moshi Sushi
New Street Grill
Origin City – **UPDATED**
Paternoster Chophouse



Pham Sushi
Pho Vietnamese
Vecchio Parioli

HEALTH, BEAUTY AND WELLBEING

Barbican Dental
Barbican Physio
City Psychotherapy
Counselling and Coaching
Cranio-Sacral Therapy
Cubitts Optometrist & Spectacles
Health in the City
London Eye Optique

No74 Hair – **UPDATED**

Personal Training

Psychotherapy City

LEARNING

Languages 2000 – **UPDATED**

SALES AND SERVICES

Citi Clean
Crispins Removals and Storage
Mail Boxes Etc, Barbican
Urban Locker Self Storage

CULTURE

Charterhouse
Ed Cross Gallery
Hato Press – **NEW**
LSO Live
Velorose Gallery – **UPDATED**

FURNISHING

Adams Blinds
MILK Concept Boutique
MyDreamKitchen

YOUR BA MEMBERSHIP

REMINDER TO CANCEL YOUR STANDING ORDER

Our previous membership system relied on standing orders and cheques, but with our new system, we now accept payment annually by card payments. Please remember to cancel your standing order. If you have trouble paying by card online, feel free to reach out to me, and we can arrange an alternative method when your renewal is due.

David Preston

Membership Secretary

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